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ABSTRACT

This document details regulations and procedures for transfer in public two-year and four-year institutions in South Carolina as mandated by Act 137 of 1995. This Act stipulates that the Council of College and University Presidents and the State Board shall develop better articulation of associate and baccalaureate degree programs. In compliance, the Commission established a Transfer Articulation Policy Committee. Consequently, the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education approved 74 courses for transfer from two- to four-year public institutions. The Commission has also mandated that all four-year public institutions shall issue annually a transfer guide covering items related to admission requirements, standardized examinations, maximums in course credits, course listings, articulation agreements, and others. Transfer Blocks/Statewide Agreements are also detailed, along with information on related reports and statewide documents. A quality assurance process for course work that requires a formal review is required every four years. Information on how the staff of the Commission on Higher Education shall print and distribute copies of these procedures is described. Copies of the processes and procedures are to be made available through the Internet and institutional catalogues. (JJL)

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Transfer and Articulation in South Carolina

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STATEWIDE AGREEMENT ON TRANSFER AND ARTICULATION

PREFACE

On May 2, 1996, the Commission on Higher Education approved unanimously the statewide agreement on transfer and articulation. That policy follows this preface in form of the Regulations and Procedures for Transfer. Minor changes have occurred in the document since its approval. These changes (e.g., the enhancement of the list of universally transferable courses at public institutions from 72 to 74) are reflected in the document as it appears here.

The policy that was approved on May 2, 1996, also incorporated decisions made by the Commission in 1995 as part of the Commission's implementation of the South Carolina School-to-Work Act. Although the text of the 1996 policy that follows makes reference to documents related to these decisions, these earlier documents have not been printed here since in some cases they are redundant and in other cases they were superseded by events or by the 1996 policy of the Commission. Copies of the documents approved in 1995 that were incorporated into the 1996 policy are, however, still available by contacting the Commission by mail, telephone, or fax at the addresses listed on the Home Page.

REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES FOR TRANSFER IN PUBLIC TWO-YEAR AND PUBLIC FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTIONS IN SOUTH CAROLINA AS MANDATED BY ACT 137 OF 1995

BACKGROUND

Section 10-C of the South Carolina School-to-Work Transition Act (1994) stipulates that the Council of College and University Presidents and the State Board for Technical and Comprehensive Education, operating through the Commission on Higher Education, shall develop better articulation of associate and baccalaureate degree programs. To comply with this requirement, the Commission upon the advice of the Council of Presidents established a Transfer Articulation Policy Committee composed of four-year institutions' vice presidents for academic affairs and the Associate Director of Instruction of the State Board for Technical and Comprehensive Education. The principal outcomes derived from the work of that committee and accepted by the Commission on Higher Education on July 6, 1995, were:

- * An expanded list of 74 courses which will transfer to four-year public institutions of South Carolina from the two-year public institutions;
- * A statewide policy document on good practices in transfer to be followed by all public institutions of higher education in the State of South Carolina, which was accepted in principle by the Advisory Committee on Academic Programs and the Commission;
- * Six task forces on statewide transfer agreements, each based in a discipline or broad area of the baccalaureate curriculum.

In 1995 the General Assembly passed Act 137 which stipulated further that the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education "notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, shall have the following additional duties and functions with regard to the various public institutions of higher education." These duties and responsibilities include the Commission's responsibility "to establish procedures for transferability of courses at the undergraduate level between two-year and four-year institutions or schools." This same provision is repeated in the legislation developed in the Report of the Joint Legislative Study Committee, which was formed by the General Assembly and signed by the Governor as Act 359 of 1996.

Act 137 directs the Commission to adopt procedures for the transfer of courses from all two-year public to all four-year public institutions of higher education in South Carolina. Proposed procedures are listed below. Unless otherwise stated, these procedures shall become effective immediately upon approval by the Commission and shall be fully implemented, unless otherwise stated, by September 1, 1997.

STATEWIDE ARTICULATION OF 74 COURSES

1. The Statewide Articulation Agreement of 74 courses already approved by the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education for transfer from two- to four-year public institutions (See List of 74 Transferable Courses) shall be applicable to public institutions, including two-year institutions and institutions within the system. In instances where an institution does not have synonymous courses to ones on this list, it shall identify comparable courses or course categories for acceptance of general education courses on the statewide list.

ADMISSIONS CRITERIA, COURSE GRADES, GPAs, VALIDATIONS

2. All four-year public institutions shall issue annually in August a transfer guide covering at least the following items:
 - A. The definition of a transfer student and requirements for admission both to the institution and, if more selective, requirements for admission to particular programs.
 - B. Limitations placed by the institution or its programs for acceptance of standardized examinations (e.g., SAT, ACT) taken more than a given time ago, for academic coursework taken elsewhere, for coursework repeated due to failure, for coursework taken at another institution while the student is academically suspended at his/her home institution, and so forth.
 - C. Institutional and, if more selective, programmatic maximums of course credits allowable in transfer.
 - D. Institutional procedures used to calculate student applicants' GPAs for transfer admission. Such procedures shall describe how nonstandard grades (withdrawal, withdrawal failing, repeated course, etc.) are evaluated; and they shall also describe whether all coursework taken prior to transfer or just coursework deemed appropriate to the student's intended four-year program of study is calculated for purposes of admission to the institution and/or programmatic major.
 - E. Lists of all courses accepted from each technical college (including the 74 courses in the Statewide Articulation Agreement) and the course equivalencies (including "free elective" category) found at the home institution for the courses accepted.
 - F. Lists of all articulation agreements with any public South Carolina two-year or other institution of higher education, together with information about how interested parties can access these agreements.
 - G. Lists of the institution's Transfer Officer(s) personnel together with telephone and FAX numbers and office address.
 - H. Institutional policies related to "academic bankruptcy" (i.e., removing an entire transcript or parts thereof from a failed or underachieving record after a period of years has passed) so that re-entry into the four-year institution with course credit earned in the interim elsewhere is done without regard to the student's earlier record.
 - I. "Residency requirements" for the minimum number of hours required to be

earned at the institution for the degree.

3. Coursework (individual courses, transfer blocks, statewide agreements) covered within these procedures shall be transferable if the student has completed the coursework with a "C" grade (2.0 on a 4.0 scale) or above, but transfer of grades does not relieve the student of the obligation to meet any G.P.A. requirements or other admissions requirements of the institution or program to which application has been made.
 - A. Any four-year institution which has institutional or programmatic admissions requirements for transfer students with cumulative grade point averages (GPAs) higher than 2.0 on a 4.0 scale shall apply such entrance requirements equally to transfer students from regionally accredited South Carolina public institutions regardless of whether students are transferring from a four-year two-year institution.
 - B. Any multi-campus institution or system shall certify by letter to the Commission that all coursework at all of its campuses applicable to a particular degree program of study is fully acceptable in transfer to meet degree requirements in the same degree program at any other of its campuses.
4. Any coursework (individual courses, transfer blocks, statewide agreements) covered within these procedures shall be transferable to any public institution without an additional fee and without any further encumbrance such as a "validation examination," "placement examination/instrument," "verification instrument," or any other stricture, notwithstanding any institutional or system policy, procedure, regulation to the contrary.

TRANSFER BLOCKS, STATEWIDE AGREEMENT, COMPLETION OF THE AA/AS DEGREE

5. The following Transfer Blocks/Statewide Agreements taken at any two-year public institution in South Carolina shall be accepted in their totality toward meeting baccalaureate degree requirements at all four-year public institutions in relevant four-year degree programs, as follows:
 - * Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences: Established curriculum block of 46-48 semester hours
 - * Business Administration: Established curriculum block of 46-51 semester hours
 - * Engineering: Established curriculum block of 33 semester hours
 - * Science and Mathematics: Established curriculum block of 51-53 semester hours
 - * Teacher Education: Established curriculum block of 38-39 semester hours for Early Childhood, Elementary, and Special Education students only. Secondary education majors and students seeking certification who are not majoring in teacher education should consult the Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences or the Math and Science transfer blocks, as relevant, to assure transferability of coursework.
 - * Nursing: By statewide agreement, at least 60 semester hours shall be accepted by any public four-year institution toward the baccalaureate completion program (BSN) from graduates of any South Carolina public associate degree program in nursing (ADN), provided that the program is accredited by the National League of Nursing and that the graduate has successfully passed the National Licensure Examination (NCLEX) and is a currently licensed Registered Nurse. (Refer inquiries to the dean of nursing at each four-year university and program chair at each two-year institution.)

(For complete information about these statewide transfer

blocks, see Transfer Blocks Information.)

6. Any "unique" academic program not specifically or by extension covered by one of the statewide transfer blocks/agreements listed in #4 above shall either create its own transfer block of 35 or more credit hours with the approval of CHE staff or shall adopt either the Arts/Social Science/Humanities or the Science/Mathematics block by September, 1996. The institution at which such program is located shall inform the staff of the CHE and every institutional president and vice president of academic affairs about this decision. (Clemson University maintains transfer blocks for the following baccalaureate majors that are unique in South Carolina: Landscape Architecture, Construction Science and Management, Fine Arts, Design (B.S. and B.A.), Graphics Communications, Textile Chemistry, Textile Science, Textile Management. Contact the Director of Admissions at Clemson for complete information on each of these blocks.)
7. Any student who has completed either an Associate of Arts or Associate of Science degree program at any public two-year South Carolina institution which contains within it the total coursework found in either the Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences Transfer Block or the Science and Mathematics Transfer Block shall automatically be entitled to junior-level status or its equivalent at whatever public senior institution to which the student might have been admitted. (Note: As agreed by the Committee on Academic Affairs, junior status applies only to campus activities such as priority order for registration for courses, residence hall assignments, parking, athletic event tickets, etc. and not in calculating academic degree credits.)

RELATED REPORTS AND STATEWIDE DOCUMENTS

8. All applicable recommendations found in the Commission's report to the General Assembly on the School-to-Work Act (approved by the Commission and transmitted to the General Assembly on July 6, 1995) are hereby incorporated into the procedures for transfer of coursework among two- and four-year institutions. (For copies of this document, contact the Division of Academic Affairs and Student Services at the Commission on Higher Education at 803-737-2245.)
9. The policy paper entitled State Policy on Transfer and Articulation, as amended to reflect changes in the numbers of transfer blocks and other Commission action since July 6, 1995, is hereby adopted as the statewide policy for institutional good practice in the sending and receiving of all course credits to be transferred. (For copies of this document, contact the Division of Academic Affairs and Student Services at the Commission on Higher Education at 803-737-2245.)

ASSURANCE OF QUALITY

10. All claims from any public two- or four-year institution challenging the effectiveness of preparation of any other public institution's coursework for transfer purposes shall be evaluated and appropriate measures shall be taken to reassure that the quality of the coursework has been reviewed and approved on a timely basis by sending and receiving institutions alike. This process of formal review shall occur every four years through the staff of the Commission on Higher Education, beginning with the approval of these procedures.

STATEWIDE PUBLICATION AND DISTRIBUTION OF INFORMATION ON TRANSFER

11. The staff of the Commission on Higher Education shall print and distribute copies of these Procedures upon their acceptance by the Commission. The staff shall also place this document and the Appendices on the Commission's Home Page on the Internet under the title "Transfer Policies."
12. By September 1 of each year, all public four-year institutions shall on their own Home Pages on the Internet under the title "Transfer Policies":

- A. Print a copy of this entire document (without appendices).
 - B. Print a copy of their entire transfer guide.
 - C. Provide to the staff of the Commission in satisfactory format a copy of their entire transfer guide for placing on the Commission's Home Page on the Internet. (See Institutional Transfer Guides.)
13. By September 1 of each year, the staff of the State Board for Technical and Comprehensive Education shall on its Home Page on the Internet under the title "Transfer Policies":
- A. Print a copy of this document (without appendices).
 - B. Provide to the Commission staff in format suitable for placing on the Commission's Home Page of the Internet a list of all articulation agreements that each of the sixteen technical colleges has with public and other four-year institutions of higher education, together with information about how interested parties can access those agreements.
14. Each two-year and four-year public institutional catalog shall contain a section entitled "TRANSFER: STATE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES." Such section at a minimum shall:
- A. Publish these procedures in their entirety (except Appendices)
 - B. Designate a chief Transfer Officer at the institution who shall:
 - provide information and other appropriate support for students considering transfer and recent transfers
 - serve as a clearinghouse for information on issues of transfer in the State of South Carolina
 - provide definitive institutional rulings on transfer questions for the institution's students under these procedures
 - work closely with feeder institutions to assure ease in transfer for their students
 - C. Designate other programmatic Transfer Officer(s) as the size of the institution and the variety of its programs might warrant
 - D. Refer interested parties to the institutional Transfer Guide
 - E. Refer interested parties to the institutions' and the Commission on Higher Education's Home Pages on the Internet for further information regarding transfer.